

TALKING POINTS – WEEK 2 MEDIA BRIEFING
Kaiser Kidney Transplant Center
May 25, 2006

Good morning. My name is Cindy Ehnes and I am Director of the Department of Managed Health Care for California. Thank you for being on this second weekly briefing call on the Kaiser kidney transplant program transition.

We've made substantial progress this week to prioritize the 2,000 Kaiser kidney patients to allow us to move quickly to assess a patient's preference as to which alternate transplant center's list they wish to be on, put patient confusion to rest and move to fully transition patients to the alternate centers.

Although there are extremely complex issues involved to transition patients and continue ongoing treatment, we are committed to ensuring patient safety and their peace of mind.

We have been working nonstop with UC San Francisco and UC Davis Medical Center officials to understand their needs in order to accept an influx of patients. We believe that all parties will meet the DMHC's Friday deadline to wrap up any outstanding issues. We've also been working with Kaiser to prioritize their patient lists so those with the most immediate treatment needs receive the care needed as soon as possible.

I'm pleased to report that the first critical needs patients should begin to transition next week.

Patients with the most immediate needs have been designated as Group 1. These patients are most likely on weekly dialysis, have completed all the necessary pre-transplant evaluations and either have a living donor available or could be matched with a suitable kidney at any time. Currently, there are 141 patients designated in Group 1.

Kaiser has begun to notify the Group 1 patients of the pending transition and asking them to which alternate program they would like to be transferred. I'd like to stress that when these patients are transferred, they will not lose any accrued wait time on the transplant list.

I'd now like to talk about progress made within the DMHC to appoint a Kidney Health Advocate within our HMO Help Center. Allison Kregness, R.N. has extensive training and background with treating kidney transplant patients, combined with first-hand experience in developing and overseeing renal dialysis programs.

Her duties will be to oversee the transition of patients from Kaiser Foundation Health Plan's kidney transplant program to alternate transplant centers, such as UC San Francisco and UC Davis. She will monitor all aspects of the transition process to ensure that patients are properly prioritized on waiting lists for potential transplant. She will review and approve all transition protocols for safety and efficiency, and work with the

receiving hospital transition teams to ensure that necessary patient authorizations are obtained and medical records are transferred. She will also verify that patients have been scheduled for an initial appointment, successfully transferred to the appropriate list, and receive the highest quality of care possible.

I'll tell you a bit about her background. Ms. Kregness is a registered nurse and a Certified Nephrology Nurse, and was brought to the Bay Area late last year to serve as Executive Director of the TransPacific Renal Network, a private nonprofit corporation in San Rafael. It is one of 18 Medicare-funded organizations established by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare in 1977 to implement a regional system of health care for patients with end stage renal disease. Our regional network serves 45 counties in northern California from the Oregon border to Fresno. Each network acts as a watchdog organization that ensures that facilities in its area adhere to Medicare regulations.

We are very fortunate to have the services of Ms. Kregness with her extensive background in renal and nephrology issues. Her job is to make sure that the welfare of these patients comes first in every decision that is made during the transition process, and that no one falls between the cracks. These patients have already experienced significant stress and discouragement, and we want to assure them that they have an advocate at the DMHC who has their best interests at heart.

Thank you.